



PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 1st April 2009

How long must passengers wait for a scientifically based Flight Time Limitations (FTL) regulation?

The European Cockpit Association (ECA), representing over 38.000 pilots from 36 European countries, attended a lunch in the European Parliament yesterday hosted by the European Transport Safety Council. ECA again called for the European Commission and the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) to incorporate the concrete recommendations of a recent scientific evaluation of Europe's current FTL rules without delay, to ensure that pilot fatigue does not endanger flight safety.

Captain Martin Chalk, President of ECA and who was a speaker at the event said; "airlines should stop acting like ostriches with their heads in the sand, not wanting to see the evidence before them. Denying there is a problem with aircrew fatigue is like a smoker who does not accept the advice of his doctor to quit, because smoking has not yet made him ill. We are talking about the safety of the travelling public, we have the latest independent scientific evidence available and we must act upon it, now!"

"If the European Commission and EASA ignore the recommendations of the scientific Moebus Report during the current EASA drafting process for new rules for flight operations, they will be breaching their obligations under ICAO and European law" said Ignacio Plaza, Legal Advisor to ECA.

- The meeting was attended by members of the European Parliament, European Commission, National Civil Aviation Authorities, members of the Scientific Community, airline management, ECA, ETF – and was chaired by David Learmount of Flight International magazine.
- Despite a small number of the airline representatives trying to discredit a recent independent scientific study on the current European rules on Flight Time Limitations (FTL), there was otherwise consensus on the need to swiftly address some key areas it identified; such as pilots' daily duty limits, rolling periods for the calculation of cumulative flying hours limits and filling the gaps left by the current rules, etc..
- ICAO requires that by Nov. 2009, all airlines' FTL schemes should be based on scientific and medical knowledge where it is available. European Regulations 1899/2006 and 216/2008 both legally require that Europe's FTL rules are based on the latest scientific and medical knowledge.
- ECA pointed out that independent experts estimated that pilot fatigue is a factor in 15-20% of all fatal aviation accidents, and the NTSB of the USA had estimated that over a seven year period in the USA 250 people had been killed in aviation accidents where pilot fatigue was a the causal factors.

For further information, please contact:
Philip von Schöppenthau, ECA Secretary General, Tel: +32-2-705.32.93 or visit:
www.eurocockpit.be